The Write Stuff:
Starting a Writers Group
at Your Library

Terry Elsey and Chris Rogers
Spartanburg County Public Libraries
Friday, November 2, 2018
SCLA/SELA Joint Annual Conference
MIDDLE TYGER WRITERS

Monday, August 13, 6:00PM - 7:00PM at the Middle Tyger Library

Join the Middle Tyger Writers for a discussion of how motor vehicles (Cars, trucks, SUV’s and vans) play a unique role in the development and tone of short fiction and novels. Guest presenter. All writers are welcome.
Give your local writers a place to come try their hand at creativity with writing

How can we help them?

• Nurture local writing talent
• Identify, prompt, coach
• Harness local writing talent
• Challenge, share, critique
• Showcase local writing talent
• Provide opportunities for exposure, publishing, awards
Determine what kind of assistance is needed...

- Brainstorming
- Writing exercises
- Editing sessions
- Grammar lessons revisited
- Descriptions of various jobs and situations for believability
Major benefits:

• Networking with other writers
• “Testing” out writing by sharing and receiving constructive critiques and feedback
• Opportunities to attend local and regional programs with authors as speakers
• Time to ask questions about writing process, inspiration, ideas, business questions and publishing tips
Resources

• Reference books
  • Visuwords https://visuwords.com/
  • The Elements of Style by William Strunk original ebook online through Project Gutenberg
  • Grammar Girl’s Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing by Mignon Fogarty https://www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl
  • The Penguin Guide to Punctuation
  • Wordcounter https://wordcounter.com/
    • Ranks frequently used words
Resources continued...

- **Books**
  - Stephen King’s “On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft”
  - The Writing Life: Writers On How They Think And Work by Marie Arana
  - *Plot & Structure: Techniques and Exercises for Crafting a Plot that Grips Readers from Start to Finish* by James Scott Bell
  - *How to Write Bestselling Fiction* by Dean Koontz
  - *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* by Ann Lamott

- **Magazines**
  - Writer’s Digest
About writing online

- The Write Life https://thewritelife.com/
- Advanced Fiction Writing https://www.advancedfictionwriting.com/

- Apps
  - Evernote - Creative Writing https://evernote.com/templates
  - Online self-publishers
    - Scrivener https://www.literatureandlatte.com/
    - Createspace https://www.createspace.com/
    - Biblioboard/Press Books/Self-e https://biblioboard.com/
    - Smashwords https://www.smashwords.com/
    - Format and distribute ebooks. Buy and sell ebooks.
    - Draft2digital https://www.draft2digital.com

- Publishers
  - https://www.janefriedman.com/key-book-publishing-path/
2018 KEY BOOK PUBLISHING PATHS • BY JANE FRIEDMAN • JANEFRIEDMAN.COM

TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING

MID-SIZE & LARGE

WHO THEY ARE


WHO THEY WORK WITH

- Authors who write with mainstream appeal

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- You receive an advance against royalties, but may advance does not earn out.
- Publisher holds onto publishing rights for up to 5 years.
- Many decisions are out of your control, such as cover design and title.
- You may be uninterested in marketing support, and find that your title "disappears" from store shelves within 3-6 months.

SPECIAL CASES

AMAZON PUBLISHING

With more than a dozen imprints, Amazon has a stable publishing operation that is mainly approachable only by agents. Amazon titles are sold primarily on Amazon, since most books are unravelling to satisfy their digital-only or digital-first imprints.

DIGITAL-ONLY OR DIGITAL-FIRST

All publishers, regardless of size, sometimes operate digital-only or digital-first imprints that offer no advance and little or no print distribution. Sometimes such efforts are indistinguishable from self-publishing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- How to Get Published: https://janefriedman.com/start-here-how-to-get-your-book-published/
- A Definition of Hybrid Publishing: https://janefriedman.com/what-is-a-hybrid-publisher/
- Should You Traditionally Publish or Self-Publish? https://janefriedman.com/should-you-self-publish-traditional/

WHO CREATED THIS?

Jane Friedman has more than 20 years of experience in the publishing industry. She is the former publisher of Writer’s Digest and co-founder of the industry newsletter for authors, The List. Find out more at hottextepub.com.
About writing online

• Blogs/Newsletters [https://hotsheetpub.com/](https://hotsheetpub.com/)
  • Daily Writing Tips by Mark Nichol [https://www.dailywritingtips.com/tools-for-authors/](https://www.dailywritingtips.com/tools-for-authors/)
  • National Novel Writing Month: NANOWRIMO [https://nanowrimo.org/](https://nanowrimo.org/)

• Marketing
  • Website creation through free ‘Wordpress’
    • Mail Chimp Marketing automation platform
  • For maintaining email list of fans, clients
• Canva [https://www.canva.com/](https://www.canva.com/)
  • For creating flyers and promotional materials
NANOWRIMO Write-In

Saturday, November 3, 10:00AM - 3:30PM at the Inman Library

If you’re trying to write 50,000 words for Nanowrimo (National Novel Writing Month), we will have meeting rooms reserved for you to write most of the day on Saturday. We will have some snacks for you and lots of encouragement. Adults 18+. 

SPARTANBURG COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES
www.spartanburglibraries.org
Inman Library: 864.472.8363
Who is thinking about starting a group but has no clue?

How do you start a writing group?

• Other aspects of running a writing group to consider?
• Do you have the time to devote to creating a unique writing program once per week or once per month?
• It’s a good idea to plan 3-6 months in advance in order to publicize, schedule potential author speakers and other speakers who can provide related information.
• Are you a good facilitator of meetings, especially when some participants may be difficult to manage regarding the amount of talking and attention they require.
• Determine if you have interested patrons.
• Determine the best date and time.
• Advertise with social media, flyers, website event calendars, newspapers, radio and word of mouth.
• Plan programs ahead.
**Possible program topics**

- Writing genres
- Flash Fiction
- Short Stories
- Prompt writing from words or pictures
- Writer sample readings & critiques
- Writing blogs
- Songwriting
- Writing Poetry
- Writing Non-Fiction
- Writing children’s stories
- Book cover art
- Writing and illustrating graphic novels
- Character development in writing
- Setting and time in writing
- Plotting and outline
- Traditional publishing vs self-publishing
- Do you need an agent?
- Social media for writers
- Managing your writing business
- Online resources for writers
Possible speakers

- Local university professors in English or Creative Writing
- Local journalists who can discuss descriptive writing
- Local law enforcement who can talk about police procedure
- Professionals who can give details about procedures or descriptions in their professions to add to believability
- Local authors
Tuesday, June 14th

At this meetup, each writer will read a short piece they have written about their family history, whether fiction or non-fiction. Join us to hear the results of this fun exercise. Be ready to provide constructive critiques. No experience necessary and everyone is welcome.

6:00pm – 7:00pm
Inman Library

Tuesday, July 12th

To honor our freedom and great country, writers should bring a poem, song or short vignette they write about this subject to share with the group for comments and constructive critique. Everyone is welcome including new and wannabe writers.

6:00pm – 7:00pm
Inman Library

WANDERING WRITERS:
Brain & Evolutionary Connections to Literature

Thursday, November 29, 6:00PM at the Inman Library

Ever wondered how the brain and evolution of man connect to literature? There is one thing that all of the world’s cultures have in common: a desire to tell and to listen to stories. What is it about our species that drives us to storytelling? In this presentation, writer and teacher Brock Adams examines the evolutionary roots of creative writing. Supported by research from evolutionary biologists and neuroscientists, Adams suggests that all storytelling is mankind’s way of practicing being human. Local author and University Instructor Brock Adams will be here to explore this topic. Adults 18+ welcome.
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